



South Metro Airport Action Council

Transmitted electronically
July 23, 2012

Representative Keith Ellison
1122 Longworth Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2305

Dear Keith,

In prior letters, we asked you to contact FAA after the budget implementations to request a review of high rates, traffic control procedures, and communications at MSP. This review is all the more needed *because of increased ground traffic and excessive overflight noise in your District*. We had hoped that the increased complaints about overflight noise and more concerns about public health risks would stimulate more attention to FAA airspace management programs and development schedules.

Noise and safety problems at MSP are not going to be resolved separately. That is the point made in the attached white paper SMAAC released and published online. Local inquiries were made, but FAA MSP and Great Lakes Regional offices did not respond. The fact of Pinnacle Airlines bankruptcy has limited rather than illuminated how the regional carrier safety program will be implemented.

Please pursue the issue vigorously with Acting Administrator Huerta.

In particular, FAA seemingly cannot connect the dots: operations at peak hour rates (simultaneous use of adjacent runways, coordinated turns) led to a near-mid-air collision; a small change in MSP procedures followed, but led to excessive noisy overflights as airlines realigned gates and departure runway pairs by destination; this led to more complicated peak hour operations at MSP which are dominated by regional carriers.

The changes were made before mandated safety programs were implemented. Changes made to control noisy overflights somewhat are limited by high peak-hour operations, and resulted in more ground traffic and congestion, without apparent ground safety facility and procedure improvements.

Thank you, and your staff, for your ongoing concern for neighborhoods, air travelers, aviation employees, and economic recovery.

Cordially,

FOR THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James R. Spensley

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